

**REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
27 AUGUST 2001**

**REPORT ON: NEW BUILD HOUSING IN DUNDEE
INTERIM REVIEW OF POLICY H10 GUIDELINES**

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION

REPORT NO: 462-2001

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to seek the Committee's approval for an interim revision to the Design Guidelines in Residential Areas, contained in the Dundee Local Plan 1998 (the H10 Guidelines).
- 1.2 This interim revision precedes a full review of the Guidelines as part of the Dundee Local Plan Review process now underway. This review will include consideration of the relationship between the H10 Guidelines, the Urban Design Strategy and other non-statutory documents, such as site planning briefs.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a approves the proposed changes to the H10 Guidelines as an interim measure pending the advancement of the review of the Dundee Local Plan 1998;
 - b has regard to the contents of this Report as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications;
 - c notes that the H10 Guidelines will be subject to further scrutiny as part of the Local Plan Review process; and
 - d remits that the contents of this Report, and specifically recommendation 2, be referred to the Development Quality Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2001.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 No financial implications arise for the City Council as a direct result of this Report.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The guidelines referred to in Policy H10 of the Dundee Local Plan seek to ensure quality in new residential development as a means of satisfying people's housing aspirations within the City and encouraging a high quality built environment, in accordance with Dundee 21.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Access to good quality housing is important in seeking to promote equality of opportunity. The proposed interim revision to the H10 Guidelines aims to improve the quality of housing across all sectors and tenures of the housing market in the City. It is recognised however, that this requires to be balanced with affordability issues.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 There are currently more houses than households in Dundee. Most recent projections from the General Register Office (Scotland) suggest that the number of households in the Dundee

City Council area is likely to decrease marginally in the period to 2012. Continued new development without a corresponding reduction in the housing stock will therefore increase the level of surplus that exists in the City. In the past surplus housing has been concentrated in the Council housing sector and has been managed through demolition.

- 6.2 The development of new housing is necessary as part of the range of physical, social and economic measures to address population out-migration. Qualitative improvements and restructuring within the housing stock in Dundee are required to ensure that most people can satisfy their aspirations in the City.
- 6.3 This fact was covered in reports to this Committee in March and December 2000 on Population Trends (Report Nos 95-2000 and 711-2000). Paragraph 6.4 of Report 711-2000 states:
- “It is clear that in terms of housing generally, the Council will need to encourage a wider range of good quality housing for sale and rent, whilst addressing imbalances in the size, type and quality of existing stock. In particular, Dundee needs more housing of the type people want within the city boundary, taking into account their views of price, amenities and a balance between these”.
- 6.4 Research published by the Scottish Executive in 2001 identifies that in 1997 Scottish Homes found that 66% of all Scottish households wished to live in either a detached house or a bungalow. A further 10% would choose a semi-detached property, 5% a terraced house, 10% a flat or maisonette and 8% had no preference. Whilst almost 40% thought that they would be unable to achieve their preferred type of dwelling, mainly on financial grounds, contrasting these national preferences with Dundee reveals a stark mismatch. In 1999, some 60% of Dundee’s housing stock was flats.
- 6.5 Among the other qualitative issues to be addressed is the high proportion of smaller flats/houses in the existing stock. It is estimated that only 40% of properties in Dundee have 3 or more bedrooms.
- 6.6 Debate at recent meetings of the Development Quality Committee relating to planning applications for residential developments has focused attention on the Design Guidelines in Residential Areas referred to in Policy H10 of the Dundee Local Plan (the H10 Guidelines). These guidelines establish a range of criteria for developments in the city centre, Inner City and Suburban areas of the City. A key function of the guidelines is to achieve an appropriate balance between the development of flats and houses.
- 6.7 In response to some of the above concerns, it is proposed that the H10 Guidelines be revised. These revisions, as outlined below, represent an interim measure, pending the consideration of this matter as part of the review of the Dundee Local Plan currently underway.

7 PROPOSED CHANGES TO H10 GUIDELINES

- 7.1 The proposed amendments to the H10 Guidelines for different parts of the City are set out below. Changes to the figures contained in the guidelines are underlined, with the current requirements shown in brackets, where this is appropriate:

City Centre

Flats will continue to be acceptable within the City Centre. However, all (most) flats should have a minimum of two bedrooms.

Inner City

It is proposed that there should now operate a general presumption in favour of houses rather than flats in the Inner City. Within this context, the fact that a site is within a predominantly flatted area will not in itself justify support for the development of more flats. Rather, new flats will only be permitted in the following circumstances:

- where the site is allocated for flatted development in the Dundee Local Plan and this form of development remains appropriate in terms of design;
- on small sites up to 12 (20) units, not allocated for residential development in the Local Plan, where site specific circumstances demand a new build architectural solution of a scale only flatted developments can provide.

New flatted developments must be of a high standard architecturally and in space provision and thereby make a positive contribution to the quality of the housing stock in the City. In this respect, the following changes to the criteria in the H10 guidelines are proposed:

- all new flats should have a minimum of two bedrooms, with at least 25% having three or more bedrooms (at least 75% to be two or more bedrooms, some should be larger)
- for developments up to 10 units a minimum of 100 square metres of total useable and private outdoor space should be provided. For developments in excess of 10 flats, 10 square metres per flat of outdoor space should be provided. Outdoor space provision may be reduced if useable, sunny balconies are provided (10 square metres per flat of useable and private space. Provision of sunny balconies may reduce the requirement for this).
- innovative design solutions incorporating secure parking provision will be encouraged.

In light of the general presumption in favour of houses, the current allowance for 25% of units on larger development sites, now more than 12 units, being flats is removed. Flats will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where site specific circumstances dictate, for example on important corners. In addition:

- a minimum of 65% (a large proportion) of houses should have three or more bedrooms;
- the private garden ground should be a minimum (average) of 50 square metres.

Suburban Developments

There will be a general presumption against the development of flats in suburban areas unless the site is allocated for this type of development in the Dundee Local Plan. In addition:

- 75% (more than half) of houses should have three or more bedrooms;
- the private garden ground should be a minimum (average) of 120 square metres, although some should be larger to provide choice.

- 7.2 Proposals which do not satisfy the above guidelines will only be supported where exceptional site specific conditions mean compliance cannot be achieved and where the proposed development will make a positive contribution to the quality and choice of housing available in the city.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 To address the challenges facing the city in terms of housing surplus requires a change in the policy approach towards new housing development. This is currently being advanced through the preparation of the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan and the review of the Dundee Local Plan. In the interim period the policy approach outlined above seeks to provide an appropriate short term response which continues to favour new development but balances this to ensure that emerging longer term policy objectives will not be undermined. In advancing the review of the Dundee Local Plan, further consideration will be offered to the H10 guidelines. Debate on this issue will be encouraged through various consultation processes with a view to balancing affordability with wider quality objectives.

9 CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning, and Director of Housing have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Reports 95/2000 and 711-2000 on Population Trends, submitted to the Planning and Transportation Committee meetings in March and December 2000.
- 10.2 Scottish Executive Central Research Unit – The Role of the Planning System in the Provision of Housing (2001).

Mike Galloway
Director of Planning & Transportation

Keith Winter
Policy and Regeneration Manager

KW/GH/KR LP7-1

16 August 2001

Dundee City Council
Tayside House
Dundee